

# COVID-19 CONTROL MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

Recent [changes to CDC guidance](#) recommend everyone wear a mask indoors in K-12 schools as an intervention to help keep students in school, even after exposure to COVID-19.

- Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care
- It is also essential for people who are not fully vaccinated to quarantine for 14 days or according to the direction of state or local public health officials after a recent close contact to someone with COVID-19
- Cases should be reported to and contact tracing should be carried out in close collaboration with the Local Health Department (guidance in [English](#), [Spanish](#))
- **Masking and other prevention interventions can help avoid the need for students to quarantine**
  - The CDC added an exception to the need to quarantine in the close contact definition to exclude students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student for more than 15 minutes where both of the following conditions are met:
    - **Both** students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting face masks AND
    - [Other K-12 school prevention](#) strategies are present
  - This exception to quarantine does NOT apply to:
    - Adults (teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting)
    - Students who are not masked or are not in settings where other prevention strategies are present.

Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in Fall 2021 is a priority. While children generally experience milder symptoms with COVID-19 than adults and, to date, have not been found to contribute substantially to the spread of the virus, transmission from those with even mild or no apparent symptoms remains a possibility. In addition, the impact of new, evolving variants on children who are not fully vaccinated is uncertain. We are learning more every day about COVID-19 in school settings and are using that data and research to make our school guidance and approach better.

Many actions that school and district administrators can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread during school sessions and activities are outlined in the Strong SchoolsNC Public Health [Toolkit](#). In addition, with rapidly accelerating viral transmission and the increased contagiousness of the Delta variant, on July 27, 2021, CDC updated the guidance to include recommendation that everyone wear a mask indoors in K-12 schools including teachers, staff, students, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status.

The CDC's revised school guidance is supported by an accompanying [Science Brief](#), which summarizes the research of COVID-19 among children and adolescents and transmission in schools and among students, families, teachers, and school staff used to shape the updated school guidance. Additionally, on July 19, 2021, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) released updated guidance for schools that recommends the implementation of a multi-pronged layered approach to reduce viral transmission, including universal masking.

Further guidance pertaining to Education, including guidance in Spanish, can be accessed [here](#).